

The Case for Atlantis in Antarctica

After detailed analysis of ancient maps and Plato's writings, researcher Rand Flem-Ath concludes that Antarctica is the site of the fabled lost continent of Atlantis.

Part 2

by Rand Flem-Ath © 1996

Extracted and edited from a transcript of his lecture, "Atlantis and the Earth's Shifting Crust", presented at Return to the Source Symposium, held at the University of Delaware, USA, 28 September 1996

Charles Hapgood showed that the 1513 Piri Re'is map contained at least 24 points that were accurate within a half a degree of longitude. European explorers did not match this level of accuracy until the 1770s during Captain Cook's famous voyages. The southern portion of the map seems to depict the subglacial features of Antarctica. This discovery was made by Captain Arlington Mallery, but Hapgood took up the map and made many more discoveries about it. Incidentally, Hapgood believed that this map included Atlantis. Figure 14 shows where Hapgood placed the lost continent.

Hapgood believed that Plato's "whole opposite continent" was a reference to America, and this island (Rocks of St Peter and St Paul), now beneath the Atlantic Ocean, seemed to him to be a place that matched Plato's words. But these Rocks of St Peter and St Paul can in no way be compared to a land mass high above sea-level and larger than Libya and Asia combined. Nevertheless, Hapgood's *Maps of the Ancient Sea Kings* remains the classic work on ancient cartography.

The second book that I read by Hapgood was his *Path of the Pole*, which provided a mechanism to resolve all the questions that were haunting me. Here was a theory that could explain a temperate Lesser Antarctica around Plato's date of 9,600 BC, and at the same time move me towards an understanding of a host of other scientific puzzles.

With [my wife] Rose's help, I wrote a paper incorporating my ideas and sent it to Charles Hapgood. (This letter is on our website, courtesy of Laura Lee.) Hapgood enthusiastically responded to our letter and told us that our work was "the first truly scientific exploration" of his work that had ever been done. Of course we were delighted, but also astonished.

Why had scientists ignored Hapgood's work? After all, Albert Einstein had written a glowing foreword to the first edition of Hapgood's book, *Earth's Shifting Crust*. My amazement led me to read about the history, sociology and philosophy of science, and I soon discovered that what was happening to Hapgood wasn't unusual at all. There is a vast difference between the sociology and logic of science. Logically, Hapgood's theory of Earth crust displacement should not have been ignored, but that's not the way science works. So let's consider his idea now.

Figure 15 shows the inside of the Earth: the core, the mantle and the crust. Figure 16 shows a blow-up of the area of the Earth near the surface and we have exaggerated the dimensions so that you can see the crust which rests upon a mobile layer, the asthenosphere, which in turn rests upon the solid mantle. An Earth crust displacement is a movement of the entire crust, including the ocean basins, over the asthenosphere. Now, keep in mind that the Earth's axis does not change. We still have the same tilt and the same seasons, but the relationship of the crust to the climatic zones is changed. In other words, the climatic zones are stable; it is the crust that moves.

To understand the ecological upheaval created by the Earth's shifting crust, we need to compare its position to the climatic zones both before and after the displacement.

In figure 17, we have North America's position relative to the polar zone. The top circle represents today's Arctic Circle. The bottom circle shows the Arctic Circle before the Earth's crust shifted. You'll notice that these two circles overlap on Greenland. That explains why Greenland has most of the glaciation in the northern hemisphere: the ice never got a chance to melt! The crust that used to be in the Arctic Circle includes the Great Lakes as well as Lake Winnipeg, Great Slave Lake and hundreds of thousands of other, smaller lakes. North America is a water-rich continent because it used to be



Fig. 14

trapped in the polar zone. The highlighted areas in the present Arctic Circle mark lands which were once temperate. In our book, *When The Sky Fell*, we showed how Arctic Norway, northern Alaska, Beringia and Siberia were much warmer before 9,600 BC than they are today. These lands exhibited temperate conditions where it is now much too cold to support such animals as hyenas, sabre-toothed tigers, antelope and the whole menagerie of species that we associate with East African terrain.

Before I take you to the southern hemisphere, I want to take you on a quick trip to Mars. In December 1985 I read an article in *Scientific American* which explained a series of mysteries about the surface of Mars by assuming that the planet's

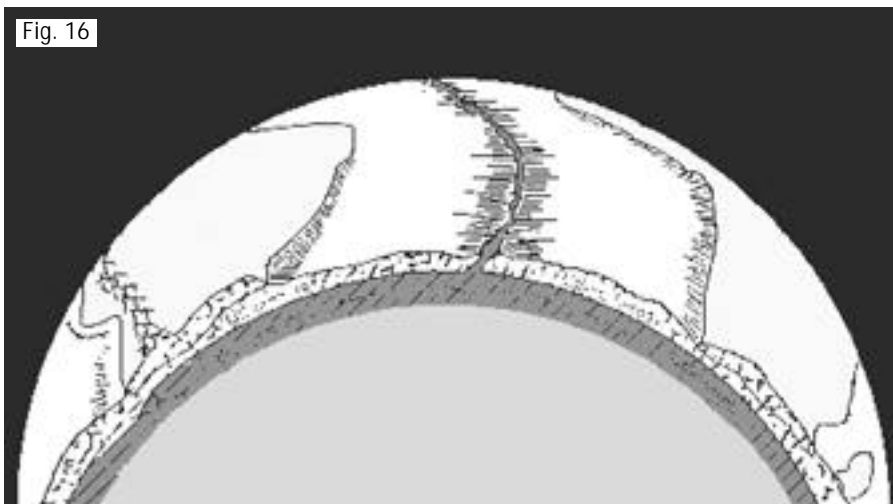


Fig. 16

Heard Island is antipodal to the Canadian province of Saskatchewan which was under ice 12,000 years ago. Both areas exhibit polar features (ice or melted ice in the form of lakes) in a temperate zone. This fits the antipodal criterion used as evidence for a crustal shift on Mars.

Greater Antarctica has so much ice because it remained inside the Antarctic Circle both before and after the Earth's crust shifted. And the area of thickest ice on Greater Antarctica is opposite to the ice-sheet on central Greenland. Lesser Antarctica is antipodal to the areas in the north, such as those in Arctic Norway, Alaska, Siberia and Beringia, which were teeming with temperate-adapted creatures.

I spoke a moment ago about the differ-

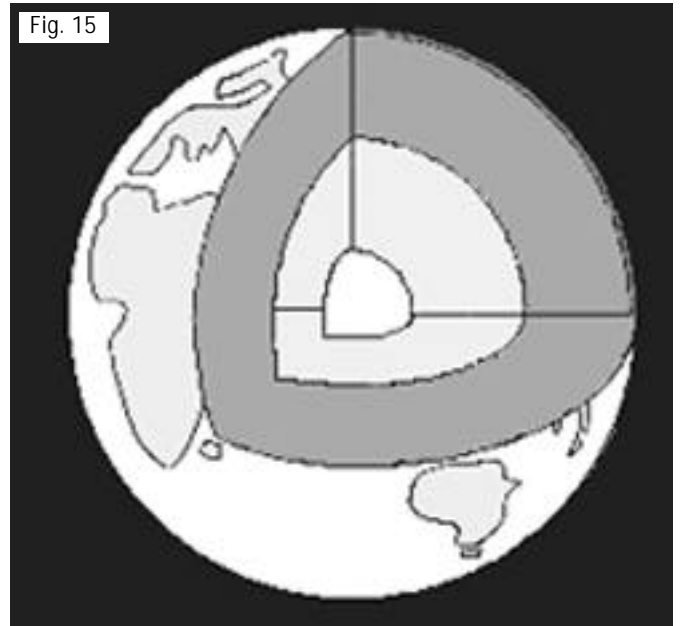


Fig. 15

whole crust had once undergone an abrupt displacement. You can imagine how excited I was! I only wished Hapgood had lived to see his ideas being applied to another planet.

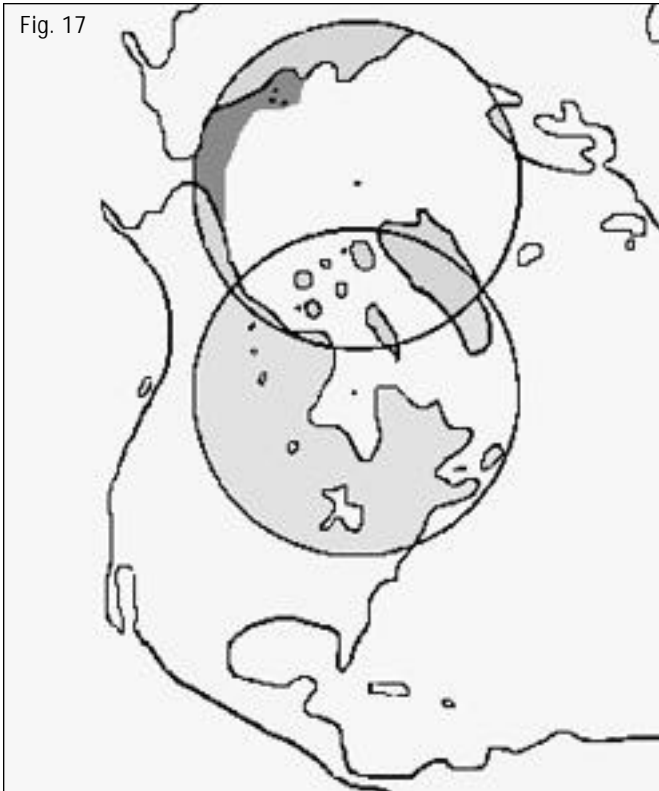
To support the idea of a crustal displacement on Mars, Dr Peter Schultz of Brown University examined the planet's craters. Asteroids or comets that impact within the polar zones exhibit characteristic crater signatures because they land on thick deposits of dust and ice that accumulate only at the poles. Schultz scanned Mars in search of craters exhibiting these polar features outside the polar zones. He found two such areas, and wrote:

These zones are antipodal: they are on the opposite faces of the planet. The deposits show many of the processes and characteristics of today's poles, but they lie near the present-day equator.

Now if the "antipodal" argument is offered as evidence of crustal displacement on Mars, then we should at least consider it here on Earth. So let's look at the former position of the Earth's crust in the southern hemisphere.

In figure 18 we see the southern areas which are opposite or antipodal to those in the north. The area in the southern Indian Ocean is antipodal to the lakes that occupy most of Canada. In this area lies the still-ice-covered Heard Island. The ice-sheet on Heard Island cannot be explained by current snowfall patterns.

Fig. 17



ence between the logic and sociology of science, and I can think of no better place to demonstrate this disparity than in Beringia. Every archaeologist is perfectly willing to accept there was once a subcontinent which lay between Siberia and Alaska 12,000 years ago, that was teeming with wildlife but which is now dead beneath the ocean. But anyone who entertains the idea that the same thing might have occurred on the exact opposite side of the

Fig. 18



Earth is breaking a taboo. To speak of a lost continent in the north, yet to deny one in the south, defies logic!

The lost animals of Beringia also need explanation. These animals died off because they were in a land that experienced a dramatic change in latitude. We can see this through what we call, in our book, "the Ring of Death".

The Ring of Death, depicted in figures 19 and 20, show the areas of the globe that experience the greatest latitude change (North and South America, fig. 19; Antarctica and Siberia, fig. 20). It also happens that these areas experienced a massive loss of animal life. The continents further away from the ring suffered fewer extinctions. And this pattern is consistent around the world: large mammals like mammoths and sabre-toothed tigers became extinct in Alaska, but, in Africa, huge mammals such as elephants and lions survived.

Now I'd like to return you to Ice Age America for a moment to see the world as it was before the last Earth crust displacement. In figure 21 we're looking at what we now call "the West Coast" of North America as it was 12,000 years ago when the crust was in a different position. The coast we see here could then be called "the South Coast". Let's imagine that we are on the Queen Charlotte Islands, the home of the Haida. From their perspective, what today is east was then north. For the Haida, Hudson Bay was to the north, Alaska and Beringia lay to the west, and California lay to the east. The Sun appeared to rise from California and set in Alaska.

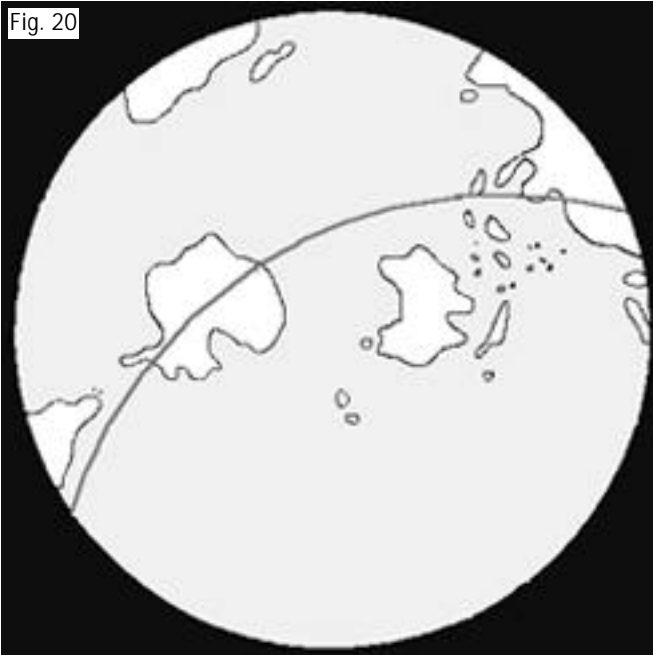
Under these conditions, a movement from what we call "the Old World" of Siberia to "the New World" of America was simply a journey from west to east. And that made it a lot easier for the people of America to arrive thousands of years before what archaeologists are considering today. And they didn't need the ice-free corridor to bring them to America. This ice-free corridor simply mirrors the arc of the Sun's former path—the area which received the most sunshine. Its existence is to be expected.

But the ice-free corridor isn't the key to the peopling of America. The stories the first people tell of their arrival in America are quite different. Consider Mount Shasta in California. The Shasta believe that this mountain was a refuge for their

Fig. 19



Fig. 20



ancestors at the time of a Great Flood. The ancestors climbed the mountain to escape the rising ocean. And this is not the only mountain which saved humanity from the Flood in native American mythology.

We have two types of stories: those in which the people are already in America when the Flood comes (stories like that of the Shasta), and stories that tell of their arrival in ships that land on mountain-tops. The Okanagan of British Columbia and Washington state tell us that their ancestors fled from a sinking island in the middle of the ocean. The Haida relate how, long ago, their ancestors lived in the world's largest village. Life was carefree until the chief of the heavens decided to destroy humankind by changing the sky and bringing a worldwide flood. Survivors escaped in large canoes that took them to a new land where they landed on a mountain-top.

We believe the sky *did* appear to change dramatically before the Flood, and that's why we called our book *When The Sky Fell*. We take perfectly seriously the Haida's story of the loss of a great

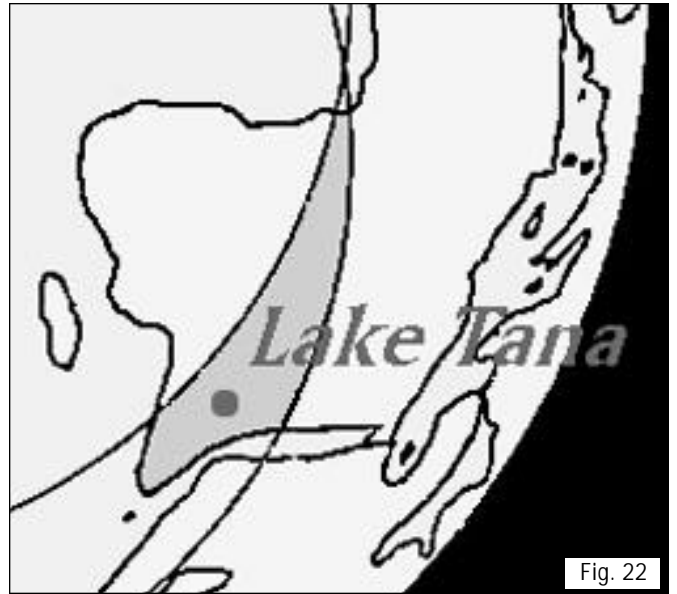


Fig. 22

city at the time of the Flood. Perhaps archaeologists should listen with a little respect to the so-called "stories" of the first people.

In 681 AD, the Japanese Emperor Temmu ordered the Guild of Narrators to record the most ancient myths. The resulting book, the *Ko-ji-ki*, told of a time when the Earth was very young, and the first land, called "Onogorojima", lay near either the North Pole or the South Pole.

I believe that Onogorojima and Atlantis are different names for Antarctica. I realise these are bold claims, but I presented evidence for the reality of an Earth crust displacement in my 1981 article in the *Anthropological Journal of Canada* (vol. 19, no. 4), a copy of which appears in the appendix of *When The Sky Fell*.

The problem archaeologists face is that the fine art of agriculture suddenly appears on different continents at approximately the same time, around 9,600 BC—that is, at the time of the destruction of Atlantis, the opening of the ice-free corridor, and the so-called "sinking" of Beringia. Now I saw the hand of the Atlantians in this development, but I couldn't use the "A-word" if I wanted to be published in a scientific journal in 1981.

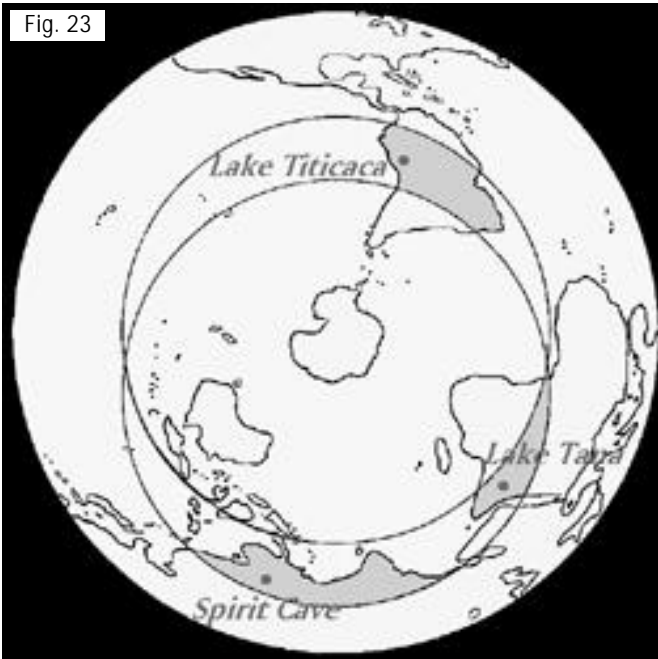
And it's no different now. The idea that Antarctica might have experienced the same fate as Beringia is just not considered scientific by the powers that control scientific publishing. But I'm proud to be associated with Atlantis. I think the taboo against the word should be broken.

In the crescent or "horn" beneath Japan we find the earliest known civilisations in the world and the most important sites for agricultural origins in what is called "the Old World". I call this crescent (as defined by the current and former path of the Tropic of Cancer) "the Horn of Plenty", for it was the most favoured land after the last Earth crust displacement. There were also favourable places in the tropics which I will discuss later, but I want you to appreciate how much happened in that particular area. I call the whole area the Horn of Plenty because it was such an important area for the domestication of both plants and ani-

Fig. 21



Fig. 23



mals. The highlighted area of China in figure 23 is the widest in the Horn of Plenty and, not surprisingly, China domesticated the greatest number of crops. The Chinese have lost much of their heritage, and I believe that there are many archaeological treasures from ancient China yet to be excavated.

India domesticated the second largest number of crops. Recent investigations by David Frawley and his associates have lifted the veil over ancient India. We are beginning to see that India is much older than most of us have suspected.

The person who first attempted to push back the clock for India was called "the Beloved Leader of the People"—Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who was jailed by the British in 1897 for seditious writings.

Fig. 24



While in prison, Tilak read deeply in all the Vedic literature, and when released he wrote a book called *The Arctic Home in the Vedas*. Tilak summarised a key passage from the *Zend-Avesta*, the oldest saga of Iran:

Ahura Mazda warns Yima, the first king of men, of the approach of a dire winter, which is to destroy every living creature by covering the land with a thick sheet of ice, and advises Yima to build a Vara, or an enclosure, to preserve the seeds of every kind of animal and plant.

Yima escaped from Airyana Vaêjo (the island-paradise now at the pole) in a ship which, like Noah's Ark, survived the Flood.

Now, I believe that Tilak was right about the ice-covered island at the pole, but I think it was Antarctica, not in the Arctic.

The so-called "Fertile Crescent", where wheat, barley, goats, pigs and sheep were first domesticated, is a sub-section of the large Horn of Plenty.

Here we must mention the lost island-paradise of "Dilmun" which was recorded by the ancient Sumerians. The myth of this lost land bears an uncanny resemblance to the mythology of the Haida of British Columbia.

The ancient Sumerians tell of a time, long ago, when their ancestors lived on the island of Dilmun. Like the great village of the Haida, life on this land was carefree until the sky-god and the flood-god decided to destroy humankind by changing the sky and bringing a worldwide Flood. Survivors escaped in a large ship which took them to a new land, where they landed upon a mountain-top. Russian scientists have linked the Haida and the ancient Sumerians linguistically and it seems that they both may have shared a common heritage from Atlantis.

And now we come to Egypt. I remember the first conversation I had with [Egyptology writer] John West. He asked me where I thought the Egyptians might have been during the Flood. I replied that I thought that they might have been in the highlands of Ethiopia, which were midway between the current and former

path of the equator. This tropical oasis was a place of refuge from the rising ocean and it contained a freshwater lake, Lake Tana (figure 22). From Lake Tana, survivors of the crustal displacement could follow the Blue Nile downstream to an area near present-day Sudan where the Blue and White Nile tributaries merge to form the Nile River. There, near present-day Khartoum, emerged a culture known as the Nubia, where agriculture began around 10,000 BC—the very date that Plato's Egyptian priest said that Atlantis was destroyed.

There is another highland tropical oasis in Thailand. At Spirit Cave we find the earliest known experiments with the domestication of rice. And no doubt we'll eventually find other archaeological sites near here. On the exact opposite side of the globe lies Lake Titicaca (figure 23). Like Lake Tana, it was a high-altitude freshwater lake that ultimately came to rest at the same distance from the equator after the displacement as it was before, creating ideal conditions for survival. This area was the site of the origin of the domestication of potatoes.

So on Lake Titicaca, this high-altitude freshwater lake, are the remains of

Fig. 25



the sort of algebraic shorthand that computers understand. Indeed, such is its purity that some historians think it did not just evolve, like other languages, but was actually constructed from scratch.

Here's an artificial language, found in an area of the world that had always intrigued me because of my research into the origins of agriculture; an area that I knew would be ideal for Atlantean survivors. It would be hard to imagine how or why the Aymara would find time to invent a language. Such developments are much more likely the product of an advanced civilisation like that of Atlantis. I am convinced that the Aymara language is another holographic fragment from a lost world. This artificial language, which hasn't evolved but remains pure, may just be a key to both our past and the future.

Our belief in progress locks us into a linear notion of time. We see ourselves progressing towards the future, leaving the past behind, but this is only a modern fixation, a deep assumption about how to view time. The Aymara people of Lake Titicaca look at time another way. They treat the future as

Tiahuanaco. The Polish researcher Arthur Posnansky linked Tiahuanaco with Aztlan, the mythical "white" island homeland of the Aztecs. On the shores of Lake Titicaca live the Aymara. One Sunday morning when we were living in London I read an article in the *Times* about the Aymara language, which really woke me up. Let me quote the relevant passage:

Aymara is rigorous and simple—which means that its syntactical rules always apply, and can be written out concisely in

behind them; they consider it a hidden place that they can't see, a place at which they will inevitably arrive but need not focus on. Psychologically, the Aymara face the past.

Plato has left us a detailed map to the greatest treasure of all. We can follow his clues to find the capital city of Atlantis. His account tells us that the city lay midway on the main island facing towards the outer island. That narrows down the search considerably (figure 24). And he tells us that the city was completely surrounded by mountains. This could only be true if the islands that lie off the mainland are themselves mountainous. And this is, in fact, the case for this area of Antarctica (figure 25). So when we combine these clues we find a location marked here that is the size of Pennsylvania (figure 26).

Perhaps we might, in our lifetime, excavate the remains of an advanced civilisation beneath the Antarctic ice-sheet. Who knows what we might find in the Atlantean libraries. Who knows what we will think of their art and their science. Is there, after all, wisdom to be mined from there? Whatever we discover, I am convinced that it will change the way we view ourselves and revolutionise the way we see time.

The present need not be the only key to understanding time. It is not too late for us to listen to the wisdom of the ancients. The past can enrich and even guide our present. And the past might even turn out to be the key to our future.

About the Speaker:

Rand Flem-Ath is co-author (with Rose Flem-Ath) of *When The Sky Fell: In Search of Atlantis*, published in 1995 by Stoddart Publishing (Ontario), Weidenfeld & Nicolson (London) and St Martin's Press (New York) (see review in NEXUS 3/01).

Fig. 26

